

Department of Community Services
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

MEMORANDUM

March 24, 1953

TO: Mr. Nelson C. Jackson, Director
Community Services

FROM: Roy E. Morris
Field Representative

SUBJ: Field Visit, Trenton, New Jersey, March 18-20, 1953.

Purpose of Visit:

This trip was made to interview a number of prospective candidates for employment at Fairless Works and/or in other places of NUL interest.

Background Information:

On an earlier trip (see Trenton, Philadelphia and Camden report dated January 30, 1953) I set up an arrangement with the Trenton, New Jersey State Employment Service office for referral of certain applicants in whom the NUL might be interested. The plan was effected through the local manager and the special employment counselor. All likely prospects for better than average jobs were to be referred to the National Urban League if no jobs commensurate with their qualifications were available locally.

Since that understanding was completed, the names and addresses of seven persons were forwarded to me from the Trenton SES office. An eighth person wrote to the NUL as a result of the recent NUL news release about Fairless Works.

Problems Presented and Action Taken:

It was expected that some of the seven persons (whose names and addresses had been sent from the N JSES-Trenton office) might be difficult to interview, because of probable employment. However, the extent of difficulty was under-rated: one person was dead - died a year ago; two others failed to return phone calls; a fourth was unknown at the telephone number she had given to the NUL; and a fifth simply could not be found. Trips to addresses given were of no use.

The other three persons (mentioned above) all men, were seen. Neither were found to be good candidates along lines of our interests at Fairless Works. One is 28 years old, a North Carolina High School graduate who migrated to Trenton in 1944 and claims to have worked at the Acme Rubber Mfg. Company in Trenton as a lead pot operator from August, 1944 until December of 1952.

Personal observation of him indicated a nervous, unstable personality - perhaps influenced by his being looked to for support of 5 children by his 21-year-old wife. I suggested that he apply in person at Fairless Works and/or at the Trenton plant of the American Steel and Wire Company. (He had never heard of either place.)

The second person seen, is 32 years old, a Trenton High School and Bok Vocational and Technical School (Philadelphia) graduate. He has a stiff left knee and left elbow and was sent to Bok Vocational and Technical School by the New Jersey Rehabilitation Commission as a physically-handicapped person to learn piano tuning. He has never worked in a factory and now puts on a religious radio program, in which he is the star, each Sunday morning over a Trenton radio station. The show is sponsored by a funeral home, in which he does some part-time work - in addition to selling pianos as a "go-between" receiving a 5% commission from a music store. We advised him to exert every effort to learn the undertaking business thoroughly and determine what long-range interest he might have in it.

The third man was about 43 years old, with 2 years of college training and about eight years of experience in recreation work with boys. We suggested further contacts for him.

At the State Employment Service Office I discussed the situation with Mr. Charles R. Walton, Employment Counselor. I advised him of the death in April of 1952 of one person whose name and address he sent to me as a prospect for a better-than-average job. I advised Mr. Walton that I should be leaving the NUL by April 30th, but that, in the future, he might send along to Mr. Julius Thomas, Industrial Relations Director, NUL, the names, addresses, and some short identifying information about outstanding Negro males or females in the local labor market.

While in Trenton I talked with Dr. Herman Long, Executive Director, American Missionary Association ~~Human~~ Relations Department, Fisk University, and with Mr. John Hope, Jr., Director, Industrial Relations Department, Fisk University. Dr. Long is the director of a community self-study in Trenton, under the auspices of the Trenton Council on Human Relations. They expect to be through in about 5 weeks.

Mr. Clifford Moore stated that this grand-scale survey being done by Dr. Long and Mr. Hope is a direct result of the work I did in Trenton in late 1951 and during 1952.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Very little success can be expected from the EJSES Trenton office in finding likely candidates for our help toward being hired and/or upgraded by the United States Steel Company. Publicity regarding our interest should be given through the Negro press and church groups. Such publicity should, however, be more specific than the release issued about interviews in Philadelphia.

For instance, high school graduation should be indicated as a minimum requirement. Attention should be sought from persons with training and/or experience operating large production machines, or in technical and professional jobs.

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